

Soldiers' Budget.

Pensions Granted.

JESSE M. COOK, Sharon, increase from \$8 to \$12 a month; John H. Hurley, Northfield, increase from \$6 to \$8 a month; Samuel P. Martin, St. Johnsbury, \$12 a month and \$1,250 arrears; Prince M. Nye, Brockton, Mass., \$50 a month and \$1,200 arrears; James Somerville, North Fayston, increase from \$6 to \$8 a month; Enoch W. Wetherbee, Springfield, \$8 a month and \$1,460 arrears; R. B. Perkins, South Pomfret; Hazen Wood, Randolph; William Hubbard, Richmond; George B. Rand, Burlington; John D. Newton, Montpelier, \$6 a month and \$30 arrears.

Questions Answered.

G. W. B. MONTPELLIER.—Dependent brothers and sisters of a soldier are only entitled to pension while under sixteen years of age.

T. R. VERGENNES.—You are not entitled to a pension. The pension laws make no provision for pensioning mothers or other dependent relatives of soldiers who died leaving widows, or children under sixteen years of age, surviving them.

G. S. DANVILLE.—The exit from office of Assistant Secretary of the Interior Hawkins will not be lamented by the soldiers. Hawkins has been arbitrary in the exercise of his duties, and seems often to have esteemed himself mightier than the law, but we doubt if the suiters who claim large damages will obtain satisfaction in the courts. They will learn that the attorney's fees in court are not contingent on success and are not limited to \$25.

S. W. RUTLAND.—Your boasting that your pension appeared to be secured so easily and quickly, and that if you had another claim to prosecute you would not employ an attorney, but do it yourself, reminds us of the old lady's remark when she came to Montpelier for the first time by rail. When fully convinced that she was in Montpelier, she exclaimed: "If I had known that I could have come so quickly I should have walked." We think that in nine cases out of ten the claimant makes a mistake in prosecuting his own claim or in employing an attorney who lacks skill and experience in the pension business.

M. B. WOODBURY.—If the treasury department settled your deceased brother's account for commutation for rations while a prisoner of war, and paid the amount due you and a surviving brother, you need not fear a suit by more distant relatives against you to recover a part of what has been paid to you. The decision of the auditor and comptroller of the treasury is an adjudication of rights with which our courts will not interfere. The treasury officials required you to prove relationship to the soldier prior to paying the sum due him to any of his heirs. If any mistake was made by omitting an heir entitled to a share of the money due the soldier the heir could now apply to the auditor, and by showing his right to a part of the money, receive it direct from the treasury. The payment of money to the wrong party does not defeat the claim of the rightful heir. In such cases the government sometimes pays a claim twice. If you made any false representations or furnished false testimony in bringing about the payment of the money to you, the government could recover the money paid you, and if the false statements were made willfully you would be liable to punishment. We assume and believe, however, that every transaction on your part was made in good faith, and therefore the money you have received is rightfully yours. Bounty and other allowances due soldiers for service in the army are paid to the heirs named in the law granting such bounty and allowances. It is seldom that any such allowances are paid to any relative of the soldier more distant than brothers and sisters. You say you have paid a niece of the soldier a part of the money paid you and desire to know if you can recover it from her. If you paid it under protest and she owns attachable property you could probably oblige her to pay you the amount.

Stray Shots.

THE commissioner of pensions, James Tanner, granted a pension last week to Enoch W. Wetherbee of Springfield, on an application filed in the pension office in 1875, of \$8 a month and \$1,450 arrears. His disability resulted from a hernia, for which he received no hospital treatment, and had not been able to satisfy any prior commissioner that the disability originated in the service. T. J. Deavitt of Montpelier prosecuted the claim.

THE new officials in the pension office are using common sense on the question of line of duty that occurs so often in the adjudication of pension claims. Last week the secretary rendered a decision granting a pension to a soldier who was injured by a blow on his back from a comrade who, without provocation, struck him with a stick of wood when the claimant was seated in front of his tent untying his shoes and preparing for bed. The secretary held that the injury was incurred in line of duty and pensionable. He added: "The government is bound to protect the soldier from unnecessary harm when in line of duty in the service, and in this case the soldier's remedy is found in the pension system, to the benefits of which he is clearly entitled."

THE commissioner of pensions rendered an important decision in passing upon the application of John Webb for an increase of pension from \$24 to \$30 a month. Webb is receiving the former rate of pension for varicose veins of the left leg, and asked for increase on the ground that total disability in the foot now exists. In granting the increase the commissioner says, in his opinion, that it was not the intention of congress in using the words "total disability" to debar claimants for pension from the benefits of the act until the hand, foot, arm or leg is a worthless incumbrance, incapable of motion and completely useless for any purposes whatever. Hereafter, he says, total disability shall be held to ex-

ist when the member, by reason of wound, injury or disease, is useless in the performance or ordinary manual labor.

PRINCE M. NYE, of Brockton, Mass., was granted a pension, last week, of \$50 a month and a handsome sum of arrears for disability resulting from injuries received on the James River, Va., May 5, 1864, while in service on the United States gunboat "Commodore Jones." The boat was blown up by a torpedo and Nye was severely injured in his back and is now nearly blind. It has been a difficult task to satisfy the commissioner of pensions that the blindness was the result of injuries received by the explosion. Mr. Nye is a poor man and stood in need of a pension. He came to Montpelier and conferred with his attorney, T. J. Deavitt, who advised him what course to pursue to make his claim successful. After the evidence had been submitted to the pension office Mr. Deavitt wrote Senator Hoar, giving him a brief statement of the case, and requesting him to intercede to have a special examination of the case immediately. A special examiner of the pension office investigated the case, with the above result. Mr. Deavitt thinks the pension ought to be \$72 a month instead of \$50.

The Secretary of War's Foot-Race.

L. D. Richards of Fremont, Neb., who served under the secretary of war, tells a good story about the secretary. In the winter of 1862 and 1863 the regiment was in camp near Bull Run, with everything quiet in camp, when one day, to liven up affairs, a foot-race by the field and staff was proposed and agreed to. The proposal was to put up a post 150 yards away, when all were to run, and the last to touch the post should pay for the supper. They were all there—Grout, Spaulding, Bullard, Poland, Cummings, MacMillan and Proctor—stripped for the contest. "One," "two" and "three" was counted, and off they went, with Proctor in the lead. Gradually they passed him, while he was puffing like a steam engine. Bullard was the last to get ahead of him. All had reached the goal and touched the post, with Proctor in the rear—it seemed a sure thing, and there was some hurrahing on account of it—counting on a good supper at his expense. But Proctor went by without touching the post and explained that it was not necessary to run very fast to win a wager of that kind. They saw the point and Bullard furnished the supper.

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Golden Memories.
I'm growing old. I have outlived
The brightness of the fading past;
The sunny days of youth are fled,
Their memories only last.
I sit and dream of good old times
In years so long gone by,
Swiftly the years come and go
As my knitting-needles fly.
I seem to see a generous heart
With fire and glow as bright as gold,
A flickering blaze, a welcome warmth
Bids defiance to the cold.
O staunch old friend! Backlog of oak!
Giving thy life to make ours bright,
With his and blaze and cheeriness
Turning all darkness into light.
I'm near thee, in the corner now,
Thou four-foot log of olden time,
Gazing above to where the stars
Seemed listening to our jests and rhyme.
The dear old saints of long ago
Who smiled serenely on our play,
Watching the roasting apples glow,
Or nuts that in the embers lay—
Have gone. Their chairs are empty now,
Lids in the attic side by side;
And children of that olden time
Are scattered o'er the country wide,
While I who loved the very stones
That make the household hearth so dear,
Can feel the blaze and see the glow
Only as memory brings it near.
—Good Housekeeping.

Native Shrubs and Vines.
It is surprising to find how little knowledge many persons who really love flowers have of our native plants. They notice them growing by the highway and in the pastures, but they never think of giving them a place in the garden. Indeed, if they saw them growing there they would hardly recognize them, for they have never given them any attention. They have ignored them simply because they were common. If they were brought from some foreign country, given a long name, and attractively described in the catalogues of the florists, almost every one would want to buy a plant. I wish I could impress the young people with the fact that the plants in the woods and fields are just as beautiful as those which foreign collectors send us, and succeed in arousing in them an interest which would lead to the formation of societies for the collection of native plants. I would like to have a society formed in each neighborhood whose object should be to gather shrubs and vines hitherto neglected and give them a place in the garden. Suppose you try this. Have an "American corner," in which nothing of foreign origin shall find a place. You would be surprised to find what an attractive place it could be made. Many persons have no shrubs or vines because they can not afford to buy high-priced plants and don't like to ask their more fortunate neighbors to give them some of theirs. Let me suggest to the boys and girls that they go out into the woods and fields and when they come across a pretty shrub or vine take it up and plant it carefully in the home yard. It may not be as rare as some neighbor's plants are, but it may be quite as beautiful for all that, and it is beauty that we want, not rarity. One of the prettiest of all shrubs is the wild rose. It makes a fine show in spring, with its delicate flowers, and later with its scarlet fruit. It is easily transplanted and soon becomes a large bush. Another is the sumach. We have no brighter plant in the fall than this, with its scarlet and yellow crowns of foliage, and to this attraction it adds that of its crimson berry-clusters which remain all winter and produce a fine effect when the ground is white with snow. It will become quite a tree in time. There are two or three varieties of native honeysuckle of shrubby growth, and one that climbs much like the Chinese variety, which produces clusters of bright-red fruit. The dogwoods are beautiful at all seasons. So are our native elders and spiraea. Among the vines there is nothing finer than the amelopsis, or American ivy, often called Virginia creeper. It grows almost everywhere. You will find it away up on the hills and down in the low, moist places. In the fall its foliage turns to a brilliant crimson and maroon, and the tops of the trees into which it has grown will have the appearance of being covered with vivid flowers. It often reaches a height of fifty feet. It clings to whatever surface it comes in contact with by means of sucker-like disks at the ends of its tendrils. It is one of the few American plants that have attracted the attention of foreign flower-lovers. In England it is the rival of the ivy and is being extensively grown there. The bitter-sweet, or celtis, is another beautiful vine. It has pretty foliage of a bright green through the summer and clear golden-yellow in the fall. Its fruit is borne in clusters along its many branches. Each berry is enclosed in a shell of orange color. This shell splits into three parts and turns back, disclosing a bright-red berry within. These clusters are retained all winter if the birds let them alone. Much use is made of them for Christmas decoration. This vine is excellent for training about porches and over gateway arches. Another native is the *Clematis Virginiana*, or virgin's bower. It dies down to the ground each year. In spring it sends up many stems which reach a height of ten and twelve feet. In July it will be almost completely covered with feathery white flowers of delightful fragrance. After the flowers have fallen the seeds develop little tufts of silky plumes, which make the plant very attractive. These are often gathered for the winter decoration of the parlor. It is not necessary to extend the list of attractive American plants. If you go out into the fields and woods with your eyes open you will discover them. They are to be had for the taking. Plant them about the house. Take care of them, and soon you will have as much reason to be proud of your collection as your more wealthy neighbor has of his.
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